

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, 20-23, and 25-30 are presently active in this case, Claims 1, 3, 4, 20, 22, and 23 having been amended, Claims 5 and 24 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 27-30 having been added by way of the present Amendment.

Claims 1-6 and 20-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection noting that support for the rejected elements can be found at page 8, lines 17-23, and page 11, lines 30-36, of the specification. However, the Applicants have amended the claims in a manner that renders this rejection moot. Thus, the Applicants request the withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 1-6 and 20-26 currently stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Loubinoux et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,294,036) in view of Angell, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,037,284), Kuts (U.S. Patent No. 2,954,815), and Suzuki U.S. Patent No. 6,296,469).

Claim 1 of the present application has been amended to recite a process where all of the multiplicity of yarns of the sheet pass through a heating zone after the sheet has passed through the rotating impregnation device. Claim 20 has been amended to recite a process comprising passing all of the multiplicity of yarns of the sheet through a heating zone after the sheet has passed through the rotating impregnation device. The Applicants submit that none of the cited references, either taken singularly or in combination, recite the limitations set forth above.

The Official Action cites oven (17) described in the Loubinoux et al. reference for the teaching of the additional heater of the present application, which were previously recited in Claims 5 and 24. The Official Action states that the oven (17) is positioned downstream of the rotating bars (24, 25), as depicted in Figure 2. However, the Loubinoux et al. reference does not depict or disclose an embodiment in which all of the yarns are passed through a heating zone after the sheet has passed through a rotating impregnation device. Using the analysis set forth in the Official Action, none of the figures of the Loubinoux et al. reference depict an embodiment in which an oven, such as oven (17), is located downstream of bars (4, 12, 24, 25).

Furthermore, the Applicants submit that none of the other cited references teach such a feature. For example, the Angell, Jr. et al. reference teaches a chiller section (50) provided after the impregnation section (20), but no heating zone. Nor do the Kuts or Suzuki references teach such a feature. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that none of the references, either taken singularly or in combination, teach or suggest processes where all of the multiplicity of yarns of the sheet are passed through a heating zone after the sheet has passed through the rotating impregnation device, as recited in Claims 1 and 20 of the present application. Thus, the Applicants submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established in the present case based upon the presently cited reference, because the references do not teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. (See MPEP 2143.) Therefore, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the obviousness rejection.

Claims 2 and 6 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 1 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed, taught, nor suggested by the applied

references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 1.

Claims 21 and 26 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 20 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed, taught, nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 20.

Claim 3 of the present application advantageously recites a process where the tension in the yarns is regulated while the yarns are being brought together in the form of the sheet. Claim 22 recites a process comprising regulating tension in a continuous yarn while the multiplicity of yarns are being brought together to form the sheet. The Applicants submit that none of the cited references, either taken singularly or in combination, recite the limitations set forth above.

The Loubinoux et al. reference is cited for the teaching of regulation in the tension of the yarns. The Loubinoux et al. reference describes introduction of a sheet (15) which is unwound under controlled tension by a pay-out (16). However, such a teaching does not teach a process where the tension in the yarns is regulated while the yarns are being brought together in the form of the sheet, as recited in Claims 3 and 22. Accordingly, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 3 and 22.

Claim 4 of the present application advantageously recites a process where the yarns are stripped of any static electricity before the sheet passes into the heating zone. Claim 23 recites a process comprising stripping the multiplicity of yarns of static electricity before the sheet enters the heating zone. The Applicants submit that none of the cited references, either taken singularly or in combination, recite the limitations set forth above.

The Official Action notes that the Loubinoux et al. reference does not teach stripping

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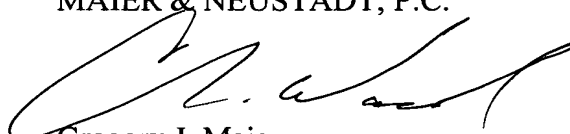
electricity from the yarns before passing the yarns through the heating zone. In fact, the Official Action does not cite any reference that teaches such a feature. However, the Official Action surmises that such a feature is well known without citing any document in support of this conclusion and without taking official notice that such a feature is without question known in the art in the context recited herein. The Applicants submit that such a rejection is improper. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the citation of a reference that discloses this feature and that includes a motivation to be combined with the other cited references to arrive at the present invention. In the absence of such a reference, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 4 and 23.

Newly added Claims 27-30 are allowable for the reasons submitted above for Claims 1 and 20. Support for these newly added claims can be found, for example, on page 9, lines 9-13, and page 11, lines 3-5, of the specification.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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